

BASAL DRAINAGE IN CHRONIC HYDROCEPHALUS.

MR. PARKIN (Hull) records another successful case of this method of treatment (*Lancet*, No. 3664). The child first came under observation at the age of eleven months. In three months the circumference of the head had increased one inch to eighteen and a half inches, and its general condition was becoming less satisfactory. After admission to the hospital in April it rapidly became worse. It lay perfectly quiet in bed, never moving its limbs and not uttering the least cry, even when taken up roughly and shaken violently from side to side. The eyes were open and staring; the head was retracted. Food was taken badly, and it vomited twice or three times in the twenty-four hours. Pulse, 84. The anterior fontanelle was very hard, with no pulsation.

A little chloroform was given, and the under surface of the cerebellum was exposed about one inch below the superior curved line of the occiput and half an inch to the right of the middle line. The bone was easily gouged away, exposing the tense dura mater. After incision of the latter a few drops of fluid came away, but the passage of a probe into the subarachnoid space and gentle raising of the cerebellum allowed the exit of a quantity of clear cerebrospinal fluid. A horsehair drain was inserted into the subarachnoid space and was brought out at the inner end of the wound, which was sewed up with a continuous suture. On the next day the condition of the child was most satisfactory. The eyes were opened intelligently, and no part of the sclerotics was visible above the pupils. The anterior fontanelle was soft and pulsated. The child smiled from time to time, moved its limbs about, and recognized its mother at once. Recovery was uninterrupted. The method of operating adopted by Parkin is described fully in the *Lancet*, July 1, 1893.

LUPUS TREATED BY THYROID EXTRACT.

BYRON BRAMWELL records two cases of lupus treated with good results by thyroid preparations. He was led to try this remedial agent in these cases partly in view of the favorable results obtained in other skin affections, notably psoriasis, and more especially owing to the liability of myxœdematous individuals to tuberculosis.

The first patient was a girl, aged sixteen and a half years, with extensive lupus of the face. It had commenced at the age of seven, and now involved the nose, left cheek, and upper lip, and a ring of scabs extended from each angle of the mouth down to the chin. An extensive cicatrix in which there were many ulcerated patches and lupus nodules covered the cheeks, and there were several outlying nodules in the surrounding healthy skin. The general health was good.

Thyroid treatment was commenced on February 15, 1893. On March 1st some crusts had fallen off and the face looked better. April 13th, feeling of heat and tightness of face gone, most of the crusts have fallen off and the outlying nodules are less distinct. When the thyroid extract was discontinued for a few days the face grew redder. At the end of May she had a severe attack of facial erysipelas. After this the amount of scabbing was less but there was distinctly more infection. The thyroid treatment was continued for eleven months, with scarcely any intermission. The author remarks:

"The disease is not yet cured, but it is very greatly improved. There is,

I think, reason to hope that further treatment will produce further improvement; but whether in the course of time a cure will result it is impossible to say. The patient and her friends state that the face has never been anything like so well as it is now since the disease became severe five years ago. But it is only right to state that the vascularity of the face varies considerably from time to time."

The second case is that of a girl, aged eighteen years, in whom the disease began at ten years of age. The disease involved the *alae nasi*, lips, and right eyelids. Thyroid treatment was commenced on December 13, 1893. Between December 23d and January 9th a decided improvement took place and had been maintained up to the present time. In the same article the author speculates on the possible efficacy of thyroid preparations in internal tuberculosis, leprosy, and cancer.—*British Med. Journal*, No. 1737.

THE DIAGNOSIS OF CALCULOUS ATROPHY OF THE PANCREAS.

LICHTHEIM (*Berliner klinische Wochenschrift*, 1894, No. 8, p. 185) has reported the case of a man, thirty-six years old, who at the age of twenty-two was suddenly seized with a severe attack of abdominal colic, attended with vomiting of greenish mucous material. The bowels were costive and the stools were said to have been black. There was fever, with sweating, and the patient kept in bed for six weeks. In the years that followed the man had successive attacks of similar character, though not of the same intensity, with intervals of freedom of several weeks' duration. At the age of twenty-eight the man was again seized with a severe attack of colic, compelling him to remain in bed for eleven weeks. Thereafter he continued in fairly good health, although constipation persisted. For a year he had suffered with diarrhoea, which had set in suddenly and had resisted the usual therapeutic measures. The stools were at first yellow, but gradually lost color. There was neither fever nor pain. With the persistence of the diarrhoea the appetite and, particularly, the thirst increased, but the patient nevertheless wasted rapidly. The weakness was marked, especially in the lower extremities. At times cramps occurred in the calves of the legs, and there was a sense of formication in the toes. Examination disclosed slight impairment of the percussion-resonance at the apices of both lungs, with harsh expiration and râles. Tubercle bacilli were at first not found in the sputum, but later their presence was demonstrable. Some four pints of urine were passed in the twenty-four hours, with a specific gravity of 1043 and containing an abundance of sugar; there was, however, no reaction to ferric chloride and none to tests for acetone. The quantity of sugar diminished notably upon the institution of a meat-diet, and ultimately all had disappeared. The liver and spleen displayed no physical alteration, and at no time had there been icterus. There was no history of alcoholism or syphilis. It was believed that the attacks of pain were due to the passage of pancreatic calculi, the presence of which had led to atrophy of the pancreas, with the development of diabetes; the diarrhoea was associated with the pancreatic lesion. The stools contained fat crystals, but no free fat even after the administration of fat with the food; tubercle bacilli were looked for, but not found. There was also no delay in the response of the urine to tests for salicylic acid after